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# Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers

In accordance with Section 38 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001

June 2011



**AN CHOMHAIRLE MHÚINTEOIREACHTA**  
*The Teaching Council*

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# Foreword

In December 2010, the Teaching Council established an Advisory Group on Initial Teacher Education. The group was tasked with advising the Council on the criteria and guidelines to be used by providers in reconceptualising programmes of initial teacher education at primary and post-primary level. The group met on seven occasions over the months from January to June 2011 where it debated and drafted a number of iterations, culminating in this document which was approved by the Council at its meeting on 13 June 2011.

The criteria and guidelines are based on the Council's *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* and are integral to the Council's *Strategy for the Review and Accreditation of Programmes of Initial Teacher Education*. As such, they form the bridge between the Council's policy and the development and implementation of reconceptualised programmes of initial teacher education in Higher Education Institutions. They provide clarity for HEIs and enable them to ensure that their programmes meet the Council's accreditation requirements.

I would like to thank the members of the group, named below, for giving of their time so generously, for sharing their experience and expertise so willingly and for their unwavering attention to detail as they undertook this work. We are indebted to Carmel Kearns, Education Officer with the Teaching Council, who acted as Secretary to the Advisory Group throughout the process.

Le gach dea-ghuí



Áine Lawlor, CEO/Director  
Chair of the Advisory Group

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# Glossary

## Professional Portfolio

The term professional portfolio is used in this document to denote an instrument which is used by the student teacher to document his or her work, to support the process of reflection on his or her practice and to identify areas in which he/she may need support or guidance. The portfolio also facilitates students to become more conscious of the theories and assumptions that guide their practice, and provides a basis for collaborative dialogue about teaching.

## HEI

The term HEI or Higher Education Institution is used in this document to denote those colleges, universities and other third level bodies providing one or more programmes of initial teacher education.

## School Placement

The term school placement refers to that part of the programme which takes place in school settings and which is designed to give the student teacher an opportunity to apply educational theory in a variety of teaching situations and school contexts. It affords the student teacher opportunities to participate in school life in a way that is structured and supported. The Council is aware that the term “teaching practice” is the more widely used term in the Irish teacher education context. However, it considers the term “school placement” more accurately reflects the nature of the experience as one encompassing a range of teaching and non-teaching activities.

## HEI Placement Tutor

The term HEI Placement Tutor is used in this document to denote a person engaged by a programme provider to support and mentor student teachers and evaluate their practice, while they are engaged in the placement element of the programme. The Council is aware that, traditionally, the term “supervisor” may have been more widely-used. However, it considers that the term tutor is preferable, in that it more accurately reflects the nature of the role.

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# Introduction

The Teaching Council was established on a statutory basis in March 2006 as the professional standards body for teaching. It has significant powers with regard to teacher education as prescribed in the Teaching Council Act, 2001 ('the Act'). In exercising these powers, the Council works within the framework of its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*. The policy highlights the evolving and dynamic context for teaching and the increasingly complex role of teachers in Ireland today. In light of that, it states that

“...the time is now right for a thorough and fresh look at teacher education to ensure that tomorrow’s teachers are competent to meet the challenges that they face and are life-long learners, continually adapting over the course of their careers to enable them to support their students’ learning.”

It further states that innovation, integration and improvement should underpin all stages of the continuum.

In parallel with the development by the Council of its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*, the Minister for Education and Skills published a *Draft National Plan to Improve Literacy and Numeracy in Schools* in November 2010. In that plan, much emphasis was placed on teachers’ professional development and it was proposed that the duration of initial teacher education (ITE) programmes should be extended and the programme content reconceptualised. The publication of the draft national plan on literacy and numeracy was timely in that it provided added impetus to the Council’s work in developing its *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education*. It is also significant that the Council is now setting out, for the first time in the history of teacher education in the State, learning outcomes for all graduates of ITE programmes.

This document was drawn up to set out the criteria and guidelines which providers of programmes of ITE are required to observe. As such, they form the bridge between the Council’s policy and the development and implementation of reconceptualised programmes.

While recognising the inter-related nature of all aspects of programmes of teacher education, the criteria and guidelines are categorised under Inputs, Processes and Outcomes. All three dimensions have an important bearing on the quality of teacher education. The required Inputs and Outcomes are clearly elaborated in the document while the Processes are less prescriptive. The latter respects the HEIs’ freedom to develop the processes which best suit their individual situations.

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Under Section 38 of the Act, ITE programmes are subject to review and accreditation by the Teaching Council, for registration purposes. In that context, this is an important document for programme providers and for programme review panels. It will also be of interest to teachers and all who are involved in promoting high quality teaching in our schools.

The criteria and guidelines set out in this document refer to current models of primary and post-primary ITE. They will be subject to ongoing review and revision, as appropriate. It may happen that, at a future date, models of ITE linking primary, post-primary and further education will be developed and, if so, it will be necessary to formulate criteria and guidelines to reflect this.

The document is available for download from the Teacher Education pages of the Council's website, [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie) and should be read in conjunction with the Council's Strategy for the Review and Professional Accreditation of Programmes of ITE and the accompanying Pro Forma for the submission of programme documentation.

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# Criteria & Guidelines

## 1. Inputs

### 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Programmes of ITE should be supported by a clearly-defined conceptual framework. The framework should be developed by providers and should be informed by research and by the Council's *Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education* and its *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers*.

The conceptual framework should identify the principles, beliefs and values about education, about teacher education and about teaching and learning in the particular teaching sector for which the programme is designed. It should begin with clearly identified theoretical statements and should provide a rationale for the model of ITE adopted by the provider. Clear linkages between the programme aims and the conceptual framework should be evident, as should the revisiting of key themes over the course of the programme.

### 1.2 The Programme

Programmes should have received academic accreditation. In addition, programmes should be the subject of ongoing internal review and quality assurance policies and procedures. The criteria guiding internal reviews should be compatible with those in this document.

External Examiners should be appointed to examine all aspects of programmes.

#### 1.2.1 Programme Aims

Programmes of ITE should be in compliance with the relevant requirements of the Teaching Council registration regulations. They should be underpinned by clearly-defined aims which are closely aligned with the programme's conceptual framework and are reflected in specific learning outcomes.

Programmes should equip newly qualified teachers with a set of competences to facilitate quality learning and cater for national priorities such as literacy, numeracy and inclusion.

Programmes should prepare student teachers for teaching, learning and assessment in their schools. This should include subject knowledge and pedagogy, school and classroom planning, classroom management and differentiated teaching.



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Programmes should prepare student teachers for entry to their professional role in the context of a collaborative, dynamic school environment, helping them to engage with colleagues, co-professionals and parents and understand their respective roles.

To summarise, programmes should ensure that tomorrow's teachers are competent to meet the challenges they will face and are prepared to be life-long learners, continually adapting over the course of their careers to enable them to support their students in achieving their full potential.

### *1.2.2 Programme Design*

The models of teaching, learning and assessment set out in the conceptual framework should be evident in the way in which the programme is structured. All areas of study should be relevant to students' future work as teachers, developing their understanding and experience of the complexity of teaching. Programmes should facilitate student teachers' personal development and their growth into their professional role, enabling them to become responsible, trustworthy, effective, reflective practitioners.

Programmes should be designed in a demonstrably integrated way, incorporating foundation studies, professional studies, school placement and, as appropriate, subject disciplines. Providers should plan for, and facilitate, this through collaborative, cross-disciplinary team processes. Specifically, foundation studies should be integrated into the programme in a way that is meaningful for student teachers and modules should explicitly focus on connections between methods courses and the social context of practice in classrooms and schools. There should be an appropriate balance between the various areas of study in terms of time and resources and the proportion of credits allocated to them. In this respect, the Council's requirements are set out in Table 1.

Table 2 sets out the areas of study required by the Council as mandatory elements of all programmes. Within the allocation of "Discretionary Time" HEIs will offer a range of optional courses, which will allow students to develop specialisms. This will require HEIs which currently devote a proportion of programme time to Arts subjects (known as "academic<sup>1</sup> electives"), as is the case with a number of primary concurrent programmes, to redesign programmes to ensure overall relevance to teacher education. In reconceptualising post-primary concurrent programmes, providers should take due cognisance of the relevant subject syllabi.

Programme design should allow for key concepts and topics to be revisited over the course of programmes in order to develop deeper understandings. It should also allow for a variety of student experiences that will contribute to students' personal and professional development.

1 The Council regards all areas of study in ITE as academic studies and believes the current practice of dividing and designating studies as being "academic" or "education" should be discontinued.

Timetables should facilitate independent study by student teachers, and allow opportunities for individual and collective reflection.

Programmes should be designed to allow a variety of teaching, learning and assessment modes to be incorporated, as appropriate, into the area of study. Tutorials, small group work and experiential learning should be a central feature of all ITE programmes.

**Table 1: ITE Programme Balance**

	Primary Consecutive 2 years (60 weeks) + Extended Gaeltacht Placement	Primary Concurrent 4 years (120 weeks) + Extended Gaeltacht Placement	Post-primary Consecutive 2 years (60 weeks)	Post-primary Concurrent 4 years (120 weeks) + Extended Gaeltacht Placement where relevant
<b>Subject Discipline(s)</b>				50% <sup>2</sup>
<b>Foundation Studies &amp; Professional Studies</b>	50%	55%	50%	25%
<b>School Placement</b>	40% (24 weeks)	25% (30 weeks)	40% (24 weeks or equivalent)	25% (30 weeks or equivalent)
<b>Discretionary Time</b>	10%	20%	10%	
<b>Gaeltacht Placement</b>	To be discussed	To be discussed	To be discussed	(3 months residency required in undergraduate programmes as part of The Teaching Council's subject specific criteria for registration purposes)

In designing programmes of teacher education, consideration needs to be given to the standard of Irish among both primary and post-primary teachers in regard to teaching Irish as a subject, using it as a means of communication in schools and using it as a medium of instruction. To this end, student teachers' confidence and competence in Irish needs to be catered for through a multi-faceted approach with a focus on oral Irish. Programmes should provide for an extended and reconceptualised Gaeltacht residency which will now form part of the overall programme and be under the direct jurisdiction of the teacher education providers. HEI staff should have an active involvement in the design, development and evaluation of the Gaeltacht course content to ensure it has a specific focus on language teaching and learning and is effectively integrated into the programme.

2 It is recognised that this may be problematic in the case of certain programmes, e.g., Physical Education and Art, and this will be addressed by the Council in consultation with the relevant programme providers

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Consideration should also be given to standards of literacy and numeracy. Programme design should ensure that student teachers are afforded opportunities to enhance their own literacy and numeracy and their competence in promoting and assessing literacy and numeracy, as appropriate to their curricular/subject area(s).

### 1.2.3 Areas of Study

Recognising that teacher education continues over the entire span of a teacher's career, the focus of ITE should be on providing student teachers with a set of high-level beginning competences to be built on through the continuum of teacher education. In this context, the importance of ITE in relation to school improvement and student learning is emphasised.

Programmes should focus on the personal development of the student teacher together with preparation for life in the classroom and for active engagement in teaching within a professional learning community. In this regard, programme components should draw upon the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct*.

The foundation studies, professional studies, the school placement and, as appropriate, the subject disciplines, should be carefully planned in light of changing understandings of the nature of learning and the theory-practice relationship. There should be an appropriate balance in the programme provision for these areas and their inter-relationship should be made explicit.

Student teachers on post-graduate programmes (consecutive model) of ITE for post-primary teachers will have undertaken their study of subject content knowledge at undergraduate stage. In the concurrent model of teacher education, the subject discipline components should:

- take due cognisance of the relevant syllabi and
- be integrated into the programme in a way that is meaningful for student teachers.

Foundation studies should:

- include curriculum studies, the history and policy of education, philosophy of education, psychology of education, sociology of education
- through macro curriculum studies, develop students' understanding of, and capacity to critically engage with, curriculum aims, design, policy, reform, pedagogy and assessment
- enhance students' understanding of the Irish education system, locate it in context and enable students to think critically about it
- provide research-informed insights into student teachers' understanding of the practices of teaching, learning and assessment

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- illuminate key dimensions of the professional context in which the thinking and actions of teachers are carried out
  - provide the basis of a strong professional ethic in teaching.

Professional studies should:

- include subject pedagogies (methodologies) and curricular studies
- develop pedagogical content knowledge
- advance the communicative skills of student teachers
- ensure that teaching itself is understood and practised as a form of self-critical learning by student teachers, with ample opportunities for teamwork and enquiry-based initiatives with colleagues.

The school placement should provide opportunities for student teachers to:

- integrate theory and practice
- plan for, and undertake, class teaching, learning and assessment using a wide range of strategies
- develop classroom, organisational and behaviour management skills
- observe experienced teachers teaching and be involved in a wide range of school activities
- reflect critically on their practice
- receive and respond to feedback on their practice
- seek and receive advice and guidance in a supportive environment.

(Further details at 1.2.5)

**Table 2: Mandatory Elements of Programmes of ITE**

All ITE programmes should address the specific elements set out hereunder. The Council recognises that many of these areas of study may already be included in programmes of ITE either through the foundation studies or professional studies. By delineating them as mandatory elements of all programmes, the Council is ensuring that, in future, all student teachers will be required to undertake them.

- Early Childhood Education (Primary)/Adolescent Learning (Post-primary)
- Inclusive Education (Special Education, Multiculturalism, Disadvantage, etc.)
- Numeracy
- Literacy
- Gaeilge (Primary)
- The Teacher as Professional/Reflective Practitioner/Researcher
- Developing a Professional Portfolio
- Parents in Education - Co-operation and Collaboration
- The School as a Learning Community
- Preparation for School Placement
- Teaching, Learning and Assessment including School and Classroom Planning
- Differentiation
- Behaviour Management
- ICT in Teaching and Learning
- Legislation Relevant to School and Classroom
- The Teacher and External Agencies.

In all areas of study there should be provision for:

- the promotion of the love of learning, reflective practice and critical thinking
- the development of student teachers' understanding of schools as organisations
- the development of student teachers as researchers and lifelong learners
- students' personal and social development, having regard to teachers' pastoral role
- student teachers' literacy and numeracy and their competence in promoting and assessing literacy and numeracy as appropriate to their curricular/subject area(s).

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#### *1.2.4 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategies*

The principles, beliefs and values about teaching, learning and assessment which are set out in the conceptual framework should be evident in the teaching, learning and assessment modes used in the programme. Systems should be in place to assess the development of the competences expected of graduating teachers which are set out in Section 3, Outcomes, in this document. They should be fair and consistent and should ensure that the graduating teacher will be capable of sustained classroom practice.

Time devoted to lectures, tutorials and independent learning should be apportioned so as to facilitate and promote subject content knowledge; subject pedagogical knowledge; pedagogy; literacy and numeracy in general and, specifically, as appropriate to the curriculum/syllabus; reflective practice; the use of ICT in teaching and learning; research and independent study, all of which are important components of student teachers' developing professional skills.

The use of assessment strategies for diagnostic and formative as well as summative purposes is important. There should be a realistic relationship between the learning opportunities and the assessment criteria which student teachers are expected to meet. Assessment processes and procedures should be coherent and should be integrated using a variety of assessment modes.

In order to graduate, students should be required to demonstrate an acceptable level of proficiency in literacy and numeracy. Assessment should gauge student teachers' literacy and numeracy, as appropriate to their subject/curricular areas. Grading criteria for all assessments should include reference to literacy and numeracy, as appropriate.

A student teacher is required to pass the school placement element of his/her teacher education programme, independently of other elements of the programme, to achieve the qualification being awarded. Students who fail the school placement should be offered teaching enrichment and mentoring support before being afforded one opportunity to repeat the placement<sup>3</sup>.

Staff responsible for assessment in any part of the programme should have, at a minimum, a qualification which is higher than that which the student is expected to attain. It is recognised that this may not always be feasible, particularly with regard to the assessment of the school placement. In such circumstances, appropriate staff development policies should be put in place to ensure that staff update their qualifications and enhance/expand their knowledge and expertise, as necessary.

3 In exceptional circumstances, a second repeat attempt may be facilitated where a student wishes to return to a programme after some years have elapsed.

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### 1.2.5 School Placement

The school placement experience is integral to all ITE programmes. It should be central to student teacher development and not merely a means of assessing student teacher performance. It is also a valuable, and sometimes critical, experience in determining, through both self and external evaluation, the student teacher's suitability and capability to be a teacher. Due to its importance and relevance, a student teacher is required to pass the school placement element of his/her teacher education programme independently of any other element of the programme, to achieve the qualification being awarded.

The duration of the school placement must be in compliance with the Teaching Council's requirements as set out in Table 1. Required placement periods should take place only in schools that are recognised in accordance with Section 10 of the Education Act, 1998<sup>4</sup>. Extended periods of school placement should be scheduled for the second half of the programme with at least one of the later placements being for a minimum of 10 weeks in one school. In all placements, the duration should be sufficient for student teachers to get to know the pupils and the learning environment. It must also allow time for the student teacher to plan, teach and assess pupil learning, evaluate and review planning and reflect on his/her practice. The experience should include opportunities for systematic observation in the school, for collaborative work with school staff and for structured participation in school life.

The duration of the placement should also allow for the development of a more reflective, enquiry-oriented approach to the school placement and facilitate the development of the teacher as reflective practitioner. The design of programmes should allow for structured preparation for the school placement and collective de-briefing and reflection immediately after the placement.

New and innovative school placement models should be developed using a partnership approach, whereby HEIs and schools actively collaborate in the organisation of the school placement. Such models would be actively fostered by providers based on a written policy on partnership with schools and would involve:

- host schools being communities of good professional practice
- greater levels of responsibility being devolved to the profession for the provision of structured support for student teachers. Structured support should include mentoring, supervision and constructive feedback on practice. In that context, students should be afforded opportunities for critical analysis of the experience, as well as observation of, and conversations with, experienced teachers.

4 Over and above the minimum periods prescribed by the Teaching Council in Table 1, providers may choose to arrange additional placements in other locations which are not recognised in accordance with Section 10 of the Education Act, 1998.

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- a whole school approach to supporting student teachers, under the guidance of principals as leaders of learning
  - an enhanced partnership between the HEI Placement Tutor and the Co-operating Teacher
  - facilitation by the HEI of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Co-operating Teachers and accreditation of same
  - facilitation by the HEI, where feasible, of CPD for other members of school staff, based on school needs
  - accommodation by the school of HEI personnel wishing to update their teaching experience
  - a minimum of two placement settings incorporating a variety of teaching situations, class levels and school contexts, as far as practicable and appropriate: different age groups of students; different sectors; various socio-economic and cultural environments; special educational needs; Gaelscoileanna/Gaelcholáistí; multi-class/mixed ability teaching situations and team teaching/co-teaching situations. In all of these contexts, the school placement should afford student teachers the opportunity to plan and implement lessons and receive constructive feedback
  - participation by student teachers in a school-based orientation programme at the beginning of the placement
  - a gradual increase in classroom responsibility for student teachers
  - opportunities for the student teacher to undertake a variety of non-teaching activities, to engage with parents and co-professionals and to observe a wide range of teaching approaches
  - the commencement of a professional portfolio by the student teacher which may include: class teaching and other school experiences; planning for teaching, learning and assessment; personal and professional reflections; recording of pupils'/students' work (written, video, audio taped, photographic, etc.); recording of professional conversations with the Co-operating Teacher, HEI Placement Tutor, fellow students, etc.
  - a requirement that all student teachers would be supported and assessed by two or more HEI Placement Tutors, at least one of whom shall have relevant curriculum/subject expertise
  - a requirement for all HEI Placement Tutors, full-time and occasional, to participate on an ongoing basis in programmes of staff development where practice and written guidelines are moderated so that a clear understanding is shared by all. This is necessary in the interests of facilitating the development of the student teacher, maintaining high standards of teaching and exercising an informed, fair and equitable approach to the awarding of grades.



### 1.3 The Duration and Nature of ITE Programmes

The Council, in co-operation with the Department of Education and Skills, is responsible for determining the duration and nature of programmes of teacher education. The Council endorses the particular strengths of both the concurrent and consecutive models for the primary and post-primary sectors and is of the view that a balance should be maintained by the State in the provision of both.

The duration and nature of ITE programmes should have regard to the professional and personal development needs of student teachers at this crucial foundation stage. It is also necessary to ensure that qualifications are recognised internationally. The duration of concurrent programmes will be a minimum of four years while post-graduate programmes of teacher education will be provided over two years, thereby facilitating the innovative reconceptualisation of current programmes. The additional time available will allow for: extended school placement periods; an increased emphasis on portfolio work; reflective practice and research/enquiry-based learning; tutorials and small group work and an increased emphasis on the key strategic priorities of literacy, numeracy and inclusion.

### 1.4 Student Intake

Minimum entry requirements, which are set down in consultation with the Minister for Education and Skills, should be adhered to so as to maintain high standards of entry to the profession. Such requirements include subject quotas to be set down by the Council in consultation with the Central Applications Office and the Post-graduate Applications Centre. Over the coming months, the Council will initiate a dialogue in relation to revised minimum entry requirements, based on the proposals which are set out in Table 3.

**Table 3: Proposed Minimum Entry Requirements with effect from 2016/2017**

Primary Teacher Education	Post-Primary Teacher Education
<b>Leaving Certificate levels:</b> <b>Maths:</b> A1 Ordinary or C3 Higher <b>English:</b> B1 Higher <b>Irish:</b> B1 Higher	<b>Post-graduate:</b> Satisfy general and subject specific criteria, in undergraduate degree, set out by the Teaching Council <b>Concurrent:</b> Minimum Leaving Certificate level, or equivalent, in subject(s) being studied for teacher education purposes, to be set by HEIs

In addition to the above, in cases where more than five years has elapsed since the applicant completed the Leaving Certificate examination, it is proposed that all applicants will be required to demonstrate literacy and numeracy competence (English) by means of an ITE Admissions Test.

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Furthermore, applicants for primary teaching and those who will be teaching Irish at post-primary level will be required to demonstrate competence in Gaeilge by means of an Irish language Admissions Test.

### 1.5 Staffing

Teacher educators have a unique role in the field of education, helping student teachers to build the foundations of their teaching career and, thus, contributing to the common good in our schools through teacher education.

Lecturers and other staff responsible for the student teachers' learning should be suitably qualified and experienced and engaged in contemporary discourse in their area. Staff should, normally, have significant experience of teaching in the relevant sector and be registered with the Teaching Council. They should be research active and take lead roles with regard to assimilating, conducting, publishing and supervising research. They should ensure the integration and application of theory in practice, in the field of teacher education.

Staff should have a qualification which is higher than that which the student is expected to attain. As stated previously at 1.2.4, it is recognised that this may not always be feasible. Appropriate staff development policies should be put in place to ensure that staff update their qualifications and/or enhance/expand their knowledge and expertise including that relating to reflective practice, research, curriculum development and professional development. They should contribute to the development of a learning community for teacher educators in their own HEI and through networking with teacher educators in other HEIs.

Ideally, the majority of HEI Placement Tutors should be registered teachers who have current or recent experience as teachers in the relevant sector.

Programmes should, at a minimum, have an academic staff/student ratio of 15/1. This allows for small group work, for the modelling of effective teaching methodologies and for teaching the skills necessary for meaningful reflective practice.

Programmes should have adequate administrative staffing levels to support the efficient organisation and delivery of the programme.

### 1.6 Facilities

Appropriate facilities should be available to support research, teaching and learning.

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These include:

- Lecture halls and resource rooms such as laboratories, music studios, ICT rooms, PE facilities, workshops for art and other practical subjects
- Access and accommodation for people with disabilities
- Teaching resources and equipment for all curricular areas
- Library facilities and resources to cater for student and staff needs
- ICT facilities including computer network access, technical services help-desk, access to the internet and availability of interactive whiteboard(s).

### 1.7 Student Support and Guidance Systems

There should be adequate provision for the personal and social development and pastoral care of student teachers. The role of the HEI Placement Tutor is central to this.

Opportunities should be provided for students to network with fellow students and with students of other programmes. In particular, provision should be made to facilitate and support club and student union activities.

Structures and procedures should be in place to facilitate staff/student interaction.

Systems, procedures and resources should be in place to ensure that student needs are identified and supported. These should include counselling, welfare, chaplaincy, medical and career services. Counselling in the context of a student teacher's suitability to continue in the programme, i.e., suitability to be a teacher referred to in 1.2.5, is of vital importance. Ideally, it should be possible for a student teacher wishing to do so, to transfer to an alternative programme, where feasible, and to carry credits in so doing.

### 1.8 Communication and Decision-making Structures

Appropriate structures should be in place to facilitate the participation of staff and students in relevant deliberation and decision-making processes. The skill of decision-making is central to the role of a teacher.

The Education Department should be represented on the HEI's Academic Council and the Governing Body, or equivalent, and staff should participate in any relevant strategic partnerships.

### 1.9 Financial Resources

Programmes should be adequately resourced to ensure that programme aims are met.

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Budgets should allow for, and reflect, the nature of a programme of teacher education which includes school placements and a range of facilities and equipment to support practical professional activities. (See, for example, 1.5 and 1.6 above for further details of the Council's requirements).

The budget for the Education Department, as a proportion of the overall budget for the HEI, should be in line with those of other professional programmes, where these exist. At a minimum, it should reflect the funding model used by the Higher Education Authority.

To ensure programme requirements are met, the Head of Education should play an active role in determining the budget for the programme and in ongoing monitoring of programme income and expenditure.

## 2. Processes

The journey which student teachers undergo during programmes of ITE plays a vital and formative role in their development as teachers. The inputs and learning outcomes, respectively, can be compared with the starting point and end point of the journey, but it is the actual process of the journey which will ultimately define student teachers' experience of the programme and determine the teachers they become. While the Council respects the individuality of HEIs in deciding the processes to be used in their programmes, it sets out the following broad requirements:

### 2.1 Teaching, Learning and Assessment Approaches

Teaching, learning and assessment approaches should be consistent with the HEI's conceptual framework for the programme as well as the beliefs and values as expressed in the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers*. There should be a focus on students' engagement and understanding with provision made for revisiting key concepts and themes over the course of the programme.

### 2.2 Engagement of Student Teachers with the Programme

Student teachers should actively engage with the programme and to facilitate this, providers should:

- integrate theory and practice in a way that is meaningful for student teachers
- achieve coherence between the HEI-based programme and school placements
- strike an appropriate balance between taught, facilitated and independent learning time
- promote reflection, discussion, simulation and analyses of cases and situations

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- involve student teachers, through experiential learning, in activities similar to those they will use with their students
  - model the active teaching methodologies they wish student teachers to emulate.

### **2.3 Engagement of Student Teachers with Staff and with Other Student Teachers**

The culture of the HEI should promote and facilitate a process of engagement between student teachers and staff, between students on the programme and with students on other teacher education programmes within and across HEIs. In particular, cross-sectoral engagement between student teachers at primary and post-primary level should be encouraged.

### **2.4 Progression within the Programme**

Appropriate progression stages should be built into programmes and be clearly specified.

### **2.5 Personal and Social Development**

Processes and systems should be in place for identifying and responding to the personal and social development needs of student teachers.

### **2.6 Attitudes, Values and Professional Dispositions**

Processes and systems should be in place to facilitate the development of the core values and professional commitments which are set out in the Teaching Council's *Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers*.

### **2.7 Life-long Learning**

Programmes of ITE should provide a sound basis for a process of life-long learning. In particular, they should introduce student teachers to the concept of the continuum of teacher education and develop student teachers' capacity to plan their learning path. In this context, students should recognise that they are building the foundation of their career in the programme of ITE and understand that this will be further developed during the post-qualification induction period and ongoing CPD. Student teachers should have opportunities to engage in research as the foundation of their practitioner-based enquiry stance in the future.

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## 2.8 Reflective Processes

Programmes should be mindful of, and challenge as appropriate, the attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning which student teachers carry with them and which inform and guide their professional practice.

Programmes should prepare students to be reflective practitioners throughout their teaching career. This will require the use of tools such as student portfolios and profiling instruments, e.g., career entry development profiles or similar.

Student portfolios begun during the teacher education programme should provide the focus for personal and professional development during the newly qualified teacher's induction period. They should further provide the framework for the teacher's ongoing reflection and professional development.

## 3 Outcomes

Programmes of initial teacher education should be designed and delivered so as to enable graduates to meet expected learning outcomes. The learning outcomes are directly related to the complex role of the teacher as referred to in the introduction to this document. They take cognisance of the fact that this is the beginning of a journey of life-long learning for the graduate teacher. The outcomes will be built on and will lead to engagement at a broader and deeper level as the teacher grows in confidence and experience.

Learning outcomes are evident through:

- formal structures which accommodate dialogue between the student and HEI personnel
- the HEI Placement Tutor's and Co-operating Teacher's observation and evaluation of the student teacher during the school placement experience
- the student teacher's presentation of projects and professional portfolios, and
- ongoing assessment of and for learning

The learning outcomes, set out by the Council, encompass the standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence together with the values, attitudes and professional dispositions which are central to the practice of teaching. Their presentation in this document is aligned to the National Qualifications Framework. This has been done to facilitate the work of programme providers in identifying the correlation between the requirements for academic and professional accreditation.

## The Learning Outcomes for Graduates of Programmes of ITE

3.1 Knowledge-Breadth <sup>5</sup> Knowledge-Kind <sup>6</sup>	The graduate will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
<b>Ethical Standards and Professional Behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the unique role of the teacher as professional in providing for the holistic development of students, and the complex and intricate nature of teaching, as explicated in the <i>Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers</i></li> <li>— the continuum of teacher education and the life-long learning journey of the teacher, recognising the stage he/she has reached on that journey.</li> </ul>
<b>Education and the Education System</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the nature and purposes of education and the social and policy contexts in which the aims of education are defined and implemented</li> <li>— the origins and development of the statutory and policy-making framework pertaining to education, his/her specific role and responsibilities emanating from that framework, together with the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including parents</li> <li>— children’s rights, including their right to a voice in various matters that relate to their lives</li> <li>— the sector in which he/she will be teaching and his/her professional responsibilities within it</li> <li>— other education sectors and factors which may impact on pupils’ transition from one sector to another</li> <li>— school culture and how it impacts on teaching and learning and the implementation of curriculum policy</li> <li>— educational research and its contribution to teaching, learning and assessment.</li> </ul>
<b>Key Principles of Planning, Teaching, Learning, Assessment, Reflection and Self-evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— current thinking on human development and learning</li> <li>— the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to effective teaching, learning and assessment, both summative and formative</li> <li>— the factors that promote and hinder effective learning, the impact of pupils’ backgrounds and identities on learning and the need to provide for the holistic development of the learner, particularly through differentiated approaches</li> <li>— the role of teachers as educational leaders who contribute to creating and sustaining learning communities in their classrooms, in their schools and through their professional networks</li> <li>— pupils as active agents in their own learning</li> <li>— the interdependence of teacher learning and pupil learning</li> <li>— models of planning coherent, differentiated and integrated teaching programmes which are informed by ongoing reflection on professional practice.</li> </ul>

5 Understanding of the theory, concepts and methods pertaining to a field (or fields) of learning. Knowledge outcomes are associated with facts and concepts; that is, they refer to knowledge of, or about, something. The more diverse, complex and varied the facts and concepts, the greater the breadth of knowledge and this is a matter of level. Breadth is distinguished from the number of different facts and concepts learned, which relates to volume.

6 Detailed knowledge and understanding in one or more specialised areas, some of it at the current boundaries of the field(s). The representation of facts and concepts, including ideas, events or happenings, is cumulative. The more facts and concepts are layered on top of each other, and draw successively upon each other to construct meaning, the higher the level of learning. This process is typically associated with progressively greater abstraction from concrete phenomena into theory.

<b>Subject Knowledge and Curriculum Process and Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the dynamic processes by which curriculum is designed and implemented</li> <li>— current national curricula/syllabi in the relevant sector and an awareness of curriculum requirements in preceding and subsequent stages of learning</li> <li>— the subject matter, pedagogical content and related methodology of the relevant curricula/syllabi and guidelines</li> <li>— the role of language in teaching the curriculum/syllabus together with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy</li> <li>— cross-curricular links and themes including citizenship; creativity; inclusion and diversity; initiative and entrepreneurship; personal, social and health education; and ICT, as appropriate to the sector and stage of education, and how these are related to life experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication and Relationship-building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— the importance of teacher-pupil relationships in the teaching/learning process</li> <li>— strategies for developing positive relationships and communicating effectively with pupils, parents, colleagues, the school principal, school management, co-professionals and the wider community</li> <li>— the roles of stakeholders and the importance of engagement and cooperation with them, contributing to the characteristic spirit of the school and developing a positive environment for teaching and learning.</li> </ul>



3.2 Know-How & Skill-Range <sup>7</sup> Know-How & Skill-Selectivity <sup>8</sup>	The graduate will be able to:
<b>Analytical, Critical Thinking, Problem-solving, Reflection and Self-evaluation Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— critically evaluate the attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning which inform and guide his/her professional practice</li> <li>— engage in data gathering and critically analyse and evaluate relevant knowledge and research</li> <li>— think critically, analyse, and solve problems, as an individual and a member of a team</li> <li>— reflect critically on his/her practice on an ongoing basis so as to inform that practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— set clear, challenging and achievable expectations for pupils</li> <li>— motivate, inspire, acknowledge and celebrate effort and success</li> <li>— apply knowledge of the individual potential of pupils, dispositions towards learning, varying backgrounds, identities, experiences and learning styles to planning for teaching, learning and assessment</li> <li>— use a range of strategies to support, monitor and assess pupils' approach to learning and their progress</li> <li>— engage with pupils in order to develop effective, creative and imaginative strategies that promote individual and shared learning</li> <li>— use technology, including multi-media resources, effectively to aid pupil learning</li> <li>— assess the achievement of curriculum objectives and adapt his/her teaching accordingly</li> <li>— apply his/her knowledge of pupils' holistic development to his/her teaching and promote social responsibility</li> <li>— contribute to effective school evaluation and planning.</li> </ul>
<b>Classroom Management And Organisational Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— create and maintain a safe, interactive and challenging environment using strategies that promote and maintain positive behaviour, in accordance with school policy</li> <li>— establish classroom management strategies that support differentiated learning in a way that respects the dignity of all pupils</li> <li>— use appropriate class management and organisation skills to cater for a range of classroom situations</li> <li>— access, develop and use a variety of curriculum resources</li> <li>— manage his/her time and work effectively and efficiently</li> </ul>
<b>Communication and Relationship-building Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— foster good relationships with and among pupils based on mutual respect and trust and meaningful interactions</li> <li>— communicate effectively with pupils, parents, colleagues, the school principal, school management, co-professionals and the wider community by using appropriate skills, styles and systems to suit the given situation and setting</li> <li>— enable children to resolve conflict</li> <li>— articulate and represent students' interests, as appropriate</li> </ul>

7 Demonstrate mastery of a complex and specialised area of skills and tools; use and modify advanced skills and tools to conduct closely guided research, professional or advanced technical activity. Skills, in both their execution and the demonstration of underpinning procedural knowledge, encompass the use of many different kinds of tool. 'Tool' refers to any device or process that facilitates individuals having some effect on their physical, informational or social environment. Tools include cognitive and social processes as well as physical implements. Tools, and the skills to use them, range from commonplace or familiar to novel or newly-invented. The sheer number of skills acquired is a matter of volume, rather than of level. The diversity of skills is a feature of this strand that contributes to differentiation in level. The completeness of the set of skills (and associated know-how) in respect of an area of activity is another feature that helps indicate the level.

8 Exercise appropriate judgement in a number of complex planning, design, technical and/or management functions related to products, services, operations or processes, including resourcing. The performance of tasks depends on the learner having an appropriate understanding of the environment in which the tasks are performed and being aware of his/her own ability and limitations, while at the same time being able to correctly judge the fit between the demands and ability. Whereas the range of know-how and skill refers to what a learner can do, selectivity (which might also be called procedural responsiveness) refers to the judgement that the learner exercises in carrying out procedures, through selecting from the range of know-how and skills available to him/her, in accordance with his/her appraisal of the demands of the task.

<b>3.3 Competence-Context<sup>9</sup> Competence-Role<sup>10</sup></b>	<b>The graduate will be able to:</b>
<b>Integration and Application of Knowledge Skills, Attitudes and Values in Complex and Unpredictable Educational Settings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— integrate relevant principles and theories of education, in the context of the relevant curriculum/syllabus, using well-developed skills of enquiry, to inform his/her professional practice</li> <li>— conduct a systematic, holistic assessment of learner needs</li> <li>— implement a range of methodologies to achieve planned outcomes</li> <li>— evaluate learner progress towards those outcomes</li> <li>— review plans on the basis of evaluation data and in consultation with others, as appropriate</li> <li>— conduct and apply relevant research as appropriate to his/her teaching context, identifying, critically analysing and integrating new knowledge regarding curriculum, pedagogy and assessment into his/her practice</li> <li>— act as an advocate on behalf of learners, referring students for specialised educational support as required and participating in the provision of that support, as appropriate.</li> </ul>
<b>3.4 Competence-Learning to Learn<sup>11</sup></b>	<b>The graduate will:</b>
<b>The Teacher as Lifelong Learner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— demonstrate a commitment to lifelong personal and professional development which is reflected in the approach taken to his/her work</li> <li>— maintain a professional portfolio</li> <li>— review the effectiveness of his/her own practice through continuous reflection on that practice</li> <li>— demonstrate a professional commitment to seeking, accepting and acting upon constructive advice</li> <li>— actively participate in professional learning communities which engage in group reflection, learning and practice</li> </ul>

9 Use advanced skills to conduct research, or advanced technical or professional activity, accepting accountability for all related decision making; transfer and apply diagnostic and creative skills in a range of contexts. Human situations, whether occupational or general social and civic, supply the context within which knowledge and skill are deployed for practical purposes. Such situations range in complexity and hence in the demands they place upon the person acting in them. Highly defined and structured situations or contexts constrain the behaviour of the individual and require lower levels of learning. The range of responses required, and hence the extent to which a broader range or higher level of knowledge and skill have to be drawn upon also depends on how predictable the context is. Acting effectively and autonomously in complex, ill-defined and unpredictable situations or contexts requires higher levels of learning.

10 Act effectively under guidance in a peer relationship with qualified practitioners; lead multiple, complex and heterogeneous groups. For many purposes, joining and functioning in various kinds of group is a key component in putting knowledge and skill to effective use. Joining a group successfully requires individuals to adopt appropriate roles within the group. This requires the application of social skills and an understanding of the tasks of the group. Higher levels of competence are associated with playing multiple roles as well as with roles requiring leadership, initiative and autonomy. Higher competence is also associated with participation in more complex and internally diverse groups.

11 Learn to act in variable and unfamiliar contexts; learn to manage learning tasks independently, professionally and ethically. This strand encompasses the extent to which an individual can recognise and acknowledge the limitations of his/her current knowledge, skill and competence and plan to transcend these limitations through further learning. Learning to learn is the ability to observe and participate in new experiences and to extract and retain meaning from these experiences. While drawing on other aspects of knowledge, skill and competence, this sub-strand places an emphasis on the relationship of the learner to his/her own learning processes. This provides a basis for abstraction and generalisation that, in principle, facilitates regarding this as a separate sub-strand of competence.

3.5 Competence-Insight <sup>12</sup>	The graduate will:
Professional and Ethical Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— know and uphold the core values and professional commitments which are set out in the <i>Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers</i></li> <li>— reflect on these values and commitments and the implications for his/her practice</li> <li>— contribute to the development of educational standards and guidelines</li> <li>— practise within the statutory framework pertaining to education, including child protection guidelines</li> <li>— share specialist knowledge in a collegial manner to support and enhance teaching and learning</li> <li>— demonstrate an understanding and consciousness of professional practice issues through the process of reflection on experience</li> <li>— uphold the reputation and standing of the teaching profession through their practice.</li> </ul>

12 Express a comprehensive internalised, personal world view manifesting solidarity with others. Insight refers to ability to engage in increasingly complex understanding and consciousness, both internally and externally, through the process of reflection on experience. Insight involves the integration of the other strands of knowledge, skill and competence with the learner's attitudes, motivation, values, beliefs, cognitive style and personality. This integration is made clear in the learner's mode of interaction with social and cultural structures of his/her community and society, while also being an individual cognitive phenomenon. A learner's self-understanding develops through evaluating the feedback received from the general environment, particularly other people, and is essential to acting in the world in a manner that is increasingly autonomous.

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